Subject: Chat with Mark Cohen
From: Mark Cohen <mark.simon.cohen@gmail.com>
To: barriticus@gmail.com

me: wikileaks release
Mark: i saw headlines about it
Mark: anything particularly interesting there?
me: yeah, even just from summaries released thus fat
me: Highly critical private remarks about David Cameron and George Osborne's "lack of depth", made by Mervyn King, the governor of the Bank of England, to the US ambassador.
me: A scornful analysis of UK "paranoia" over the US-UK so-called special relationship. It is suggested that "keeping HMGthe British government "off-balance" about itthe relationship might be a good idea.
me: (it looks like we accomplished that one)
me: The extraordinarily close relationship between Vladimir Putin, the Russian prime minister, and Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian prime minister, which is causing intense US suspicion. Cables detail allegations of "lavish gifts", lucrative energy contracts and the use by Berlusconi of a "shadowy" Russian-speaking Italian go-between.
Mark: that last bit is interesting
Mark: not terribly surprising, on some level
me: not surprising
me: here's one that will rock the world
me: a profile of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, who they say is accompanied everywhere by a "voluptuous blonde" Ukrainian nurse.
Mark: why shouldn't the new-age quasi-democratic strongmen be best-buds
Mark: haha
Mark: beating up on qaddifi is almonst just mean-spirited
Mark: it's no secret the guy is a clown
me: it's also no secret he has a whole fucking all-female elite bodyguard squad, so I don't see how this even warrants a cable
me: seriously, look how this is thrown in in the Guardian piece
me: Other revelations include a description of a near "environmental disaster" last year over a rogue shipment of enriched uranium, technical details of secret US-Russian nuclear missile negotiations in Geneva, and a profile of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, who they say is accompanied everywhere by a "voluptuous blonde" Ukrainian nurse.
Mark: doesn't quite fit in, does it
Mark: though one does have to keep in mind that there's no reason to assume there isn't misinformation just because these are internal state dept communications
Mark: apparently there's stuff on iran buying north korean missiles
Mark: which sounds like the kind of bullshit that was paraded about iraq back in the day
me: could be, although if it were intended as disinformation, that means that to some extent

the U.S. or some element thereof was aware that cables would be made public, which would raise a lot of other questions
Mark: i don't mean like that
Mark: it's more likely a question of the expected standard of verification
Mark: some cia or state department foreign official digs up an informant with a story about iran military activities
Mark: how much proof does the official demand before passing it along to washington?
me: probably not much, based on what we know of the last decade
Mark: that's what i'm referring to
me: obviously there's a wide variance depending on which clique one's talking about
me: like the CIA's Team B back in the Cold War, which vastly overestimated Soviet military capability
Mark: oh, really?
me: oh, by the way, if you'v never seen Nixon, I recommend it strongly
Mark: ok